SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Sir, as announced—it is part of the total budget announcement—the total money is Rs. 200 crore at the present moment. No amount has been expended from that fund. Yes, Sir, it was announced during the Budget itself that the Government has decided to move away from the line of credit system really to a method in which it is better for India to start giving direct grants in consultation with the MEA; and we have already initiated action in this regard.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Exemption to donation from tax in Gujarat

*450. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any representation has been received from Government of Gujarat to extend the time-limit of exemption under 80(G) of the Income-tax Act for receipt and utilisation of donation made to the NGO's and charitable trusts for relief and rehabilitation to earthquake-affected areas of Gujarat;

(b) if so, whether the proposal has been considered by Government: and

(c) by when the decision is likely to be announced?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) Yes sir.

(b) and (c) The representation is under consideration.

Facilities provided to Haj Pilgrims

†* 451. SHRI BASHISTHA NARAIN SINGH: Will the Minister of a CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of concessions and facilities being provided to Haj Pilgrims travelling by plane;

(b) the number of Haj Pilgrims who availed this facility during this year;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) whether such types of facilities would be provided to Sikhs, Christian and Hindu Pilgrims also; and

(d) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) and (b) Government makes arrangements for air travel of Haj Pilgrims to/from Saudi Arabia for which the pilgrims are required to pay fare at a subsidised rate. Besides, Government in cooperation with the Government of Saudi Arabia also makes arrangements for the stay, transport, health check-up etc. of the Haj Pilgrims during their stay in Saudi Arabia. This year 69,721 Haj Pilgrims availed of these facilities.

(c) and (d) Government provides free medical facilities, security insurance cover and communication links for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra. Besides, a grant at the rate of Rs. 3250 per pilgrim is also given to Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam to partially offset the expenditure incurred on boarding and lodging for the pilgrims. Delhi Government provides free stay to pilgrims at New Delhi. Facilitation of grant of visa, transport arrangements and liaison by Indian High Commission are provided to the pilgrims to Nanaksar (Pakistan). Administrative arrangements for pilgrimage to Amarnath, Vaishno Devi and Tirupati are made by the concerned State Governments and Boards.

Ticketing system at Taj Mahal and other monuments

*452. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any incident of reselling of tickets at Taj Mahal has come to the notice of Government;

(b) if so, the action taken against the personnels indulging in such acts;

(c) in what manner the ASI propose to streamline ticketing system at Taj and other important tourist places all over the country; and

(d) the details of the tiff between CISF and employees of ASI at Taj in December, 2002?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) to (d) A scuffle had taken place at the western gate of Taj Mahal between a monument attendant of Archaeological Survey of India and a